

Serial No.: 09/618,591

Docket No.: E-995

Remarks

Claims 1-18 have been allowed. The prosecution on the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quale.

The trademark used on page 1 has been amended to address the Examiner's comments as well as properly identify the trademark.

The drawings were objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR § 1.84(p)(4) because reference characters "22 and "23" have both been used to designate an item of mail in Figs. 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. The drawings were further objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR § 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the certain reference signs mentioned in the description. The drawings were further objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR § 1.84(p)(5) because they include the certain reference signs not mentioned in the description. Proposed drawing changes for Figs. 1 and 2 are being submitted concurrently herewith that in Fig. 1 changes reference character 23 to 22; and in Fig 2, deletes reference characters 22, 28, 30 and 32, and adds reference character G. The specification is being amended to change reference character 23 to 22. A Substitute Sheet for Figs. 1 and 2 is being submitted herewith to make the Figures consistent with the specification. Formal drawings will be submitted after the Examiner has considered the proposed drawing corrections.

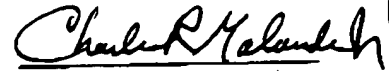
The disclosure has been objected to because of certain informalities identified in the Office Action Section 4. The specification and drawings have been amended to correct the identified informalities.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that application is in condition for allowance and favorable action thereon is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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MARKED VERSION TO SHOW CHANGES**In the Specification:****Replace page 1, second paragraph with the following:**

Recently a new way of franking mailpieces to evidence payment has been developed and introduced by the assignee of the subject invention in accordance with the Information Based Indicia Program (IBIP) of the U.S. Postal Service. Unlike previous forms of proof of payment such as stamps and postage meter indicia, IBIP indicia do not rely on details of the printing process to provide security but instead incorporate encrypted information unique to each indicium which cannot be produced without knowledge of secret cryptographic keys. IBIP indicia have many advantages. For example, the information incorporated into the indicia not only provides security against counterfeit indicia, but allows the Postal Service to more closely track its operations and the needs of its customers. A particular advantage of IBIP and similar indicia is that, because they do not rely upon particular details of the printing process for security, mailers can print indicia themselves with a conventional digital printer. The Assignee of the subject invention has recently introduced a service under the trade name "~~ClickStamp Online~~" **CLICKSTAMPTM ONLINE** which enables mailers to print IBIP type indicia using their own digital printers.

Replace page 5, third paragraph with the following:

Figure 2 shows mailpiece 22, also referred to herein as envelope 22, which is printed with indicium I in a conventional manner. Envelope 23 functions as a substrate for printing indicium I, which consists of three portions: human readable portion HR, which contains data such as the postage amount and date in human readable form, graphic portion G which contains graphics such as a service provider logo or mailer advertisement and, encrypted portion 2DBC which contains encrypted data used to securely evidence payment of postage in a known manner as described above. Typically the encrypted data will be in a two dimensional bar code format such as the well known PDF 417 format.

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Replace page 5, fourth paragraph that ends on page 6 with the following:

Envelope 23-22 has width W and height H and right and upper edges 22R and 22U. Envelope 23-22 also has a fixed reserved clear area F . In accordance with Postal Service regulations reserved clear area F is a distance $d1$ from edge 22R, has width $d2$ and height $d5$, and lies along edge 22U.

Replace page 6, second paragraph with the following:

From the width W and height H of envelope 23-22 and characteristics of printer 14, driver 19 determines an unprintable area 26 in which system 10, as configured, cannot print and a complementary printable area 25. In the prior art, indicium I is positioned for printing in the upper right corner of envelope 23-22 at predetermined minimum distances from edges 22R and 22U in accordance with Postal Service regulations. As unprintable area 26 becomes greater than these minimum dimensions the position of indicium I is shifted down and to the left, remaining in the upper right corner of printable area 25. Since width $d3$ of portion HR is preferably chosen less than distance $d1$, and height $d4$ is preferably chosen greater than or equal to height $d5$, for a range of sizes for unprintable area 26 indicium I will not overlap reserved clear area F . (Note that for other system configurations, unprintable area 26 can also extend along the left and/or lower edges of envelope 23-22 but since this does not substantially affect the embodiments described here this does not need to be discussed here.)

Replace page 6, second paragraph with the following:

Figure 3 shows the possible effects of a change in system configuration; typically either a change in characteristics of printer 14 or in the dimensions of envelope 23-22. New unprintable area 27 and printable area 29 are determined and positioning indicium I in the upper right corner of printable area 29 causes portion HR to overlap the FIM mark in reserved clear area F .

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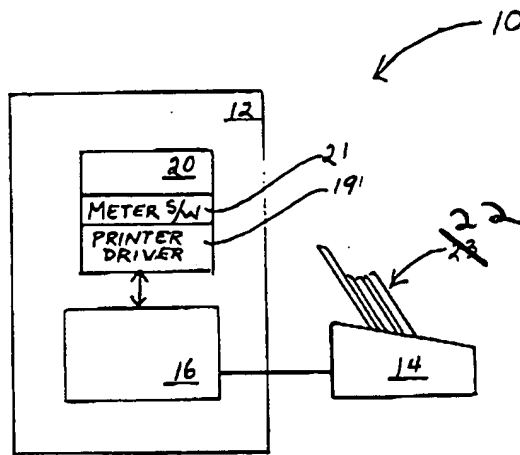


FIG. 1

approved
Eric
30-1-03

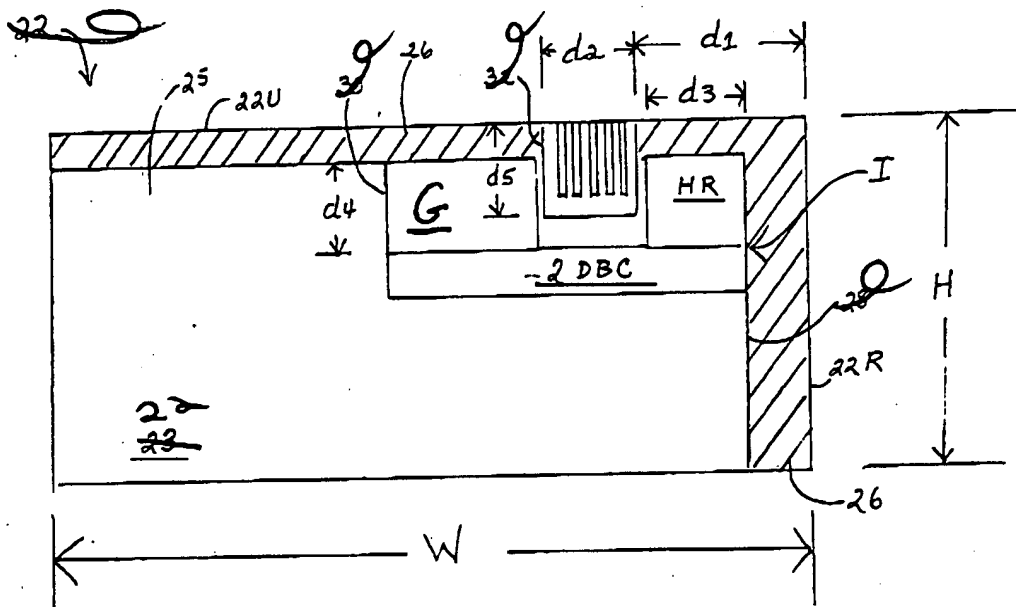


FIG. 2
PRIOR ART